

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 SAIGON 17974 161659Z

44

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14 OMB-01 DPW-01 EB-11 COME-00

TRSE-00 AID-20 AGR-20 EUR-25 NIC-01 IGA-02 DRC-01

/207 W

----- 119196

R 160145Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8069

S E C R E T SAIGON 17974

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ECON, MOPS, VS

SUBJECT: GVN ECONOMIC BLOCKAGE IN CHAU DOC: EFFECTS ON
VC/NVA UNITS

FOLLOWING TEL RECEIVED FROM CAN THO OCT 13, REPEATED TO YOU.

QTE

S E C R E T CAN THO 767

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: ECON MOPS VS

SUBJECT: GVN ECONOMIC BLOCKAGE IN CHAU DOC: EFFECTS ON VC/NVA UNITS

1. SUMMARY: THE GVN ECONOMIC BLOCKADE PROGRAM TO KEEP
ESSENTIAL GOODS OUT OF COMMUNIST HANDS IS ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT
IN CHAU DOC PROVINCE, ACROSS WHOSE NORTHERN BORDER AN UNKNOWN
QUANTITY OF RICE AND OTHER NECESSITIES HAS MOVED TO FEED VC,
NVA, AND KHMER INSURGENT (KI) TROOPS. THE BLOCKADE, WHICH BEGAN
IN LATE AUGUST, HAS AS ONE OF ITS PRINCIPAL FEATURES A BAN AGAINST
THE UNAUTHORIZED TRANSPORT OF ANY BUT THE SMALLEST AMOUNTS OF
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 SAIGON 17974 161659Z

RICE. AS OF THE END OF SEPTEMBER, CHAU DOC AUTHORITIES, WITH

THE COOPERATION OF THE 44TH SPECIAL TACTICAL ZONE COMMANDER, HAD, IN MANY SMALL SEIZURES, CONFISCATED A MODEST AMOUNT OF RICE AND OTHER STAPLES AND ARRESTED A SIZEABLE NUMBER OF PEOPLE, MOSTLY IN TAN CHAU DISTRICT. LOCAL OFFICIALS SEEM IMPRESSED BY THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE PROJECT, WHICH APPEARS TO HAVE ADDED TO THE DIFFICULTIES OF CROSS-BORDER COMMUNIST TROOPS--AS WELL AS THOSE ON GIAI MOUNTAIN IN CHAU DOC--IN FEEDING THEMSELVES. THE INFORMATION IN THIS REPORT COMES FROM CHAU DOC SECTOR OFFICERS. END SUMMARY.

2. AS OF 30 SEPTEMBER AUTHORITIES IN CHAU DOC PROVINCE HAD ARRESTED 468 PEOPLE FOR ILLEGALLY TRANSPORTING COMMODITIES, AND HAD CONFISCATED THE FOLLOWING AMOUNTS OF MATERIALS AND FOOD-STUFFS:

RICE PADDY 27,653 KG
MILLED RICE 19,860 KG
SUGAR 645 KG
SALT 15,070 KG
GASOLINE 2,045 L
OIL 1,880 L
KEROSENE 2,501 L

(NOTE: THE CONFISCATED RICE WOULD FEED A 200-MAN UNIT FOR A YEAR.) MOST OF THE ARRESTS AND CONFISCATIONS HAVE OCCURRED IN TAN CHAU DISTRICT, REPORTEDLY ONE OF THE PRIME SUPPLY POINTS FOR GOODS MOVING INTO CAMBODIA. ACTING ON REPORTS THAT A NUMBER OF SUPPLY CHAINS WHICH OPERATE OUT OF TAN CHAU WERE MOVING GOODS ACROSS INTO HONG NGU DISTRICT OF KIEN PHONG PROVINCE AND THEN INTO CAMBODIA, CHAU DOC POLICE AND MILITARY UNITS BEGAN AN INTENSIFIED EFFORT TO DISRUPT THEM.

3. BOTH CHAU DOC PROVINCE CHIEF COLONEL NGUYEN DANG PHUONG AND 44TH SPECIAL TACTICAL ZONE COMMANDER COLONEL HOANG DUC NINH HAVE GIVEN SPECIAL COMMAND EMPHASIS TO THE ECONOMIC BLOCKAGE. NINH OCTOBER 20 PERSONALLY INSPECTED POLICE BOATS OPERATING IN TAN CHAU, CESITE THE FACT THAT HIS TROOPS WERE HEAVILY ENGAGED ON GIAI MOUNTAIN. NINH'S INSPECTION RESULTED IN A REQUIREMENT FOR SECTOR TO IMPROVE THE OPERATIONS OF SPECIFIC RIVER PATROL BOATS, AND AN ORDER FOR THE PROVINCE POLICE CHIEF TO MAKE
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 SAIGON 17974 161659Z

PERSONAL INSPECTIONS OF RIVERINE POLICE PATROLS. FURTHER, ORDERS ARE OUT TO BUILD BORDER CHECKPOINTS ON BOTH THE BASSAC AND MEKONG RIVERS.

4. AS FOR SECTOR AND LOWER OFFICIALS, THE SERIOUSNESS WITH WHICH THE BLOCKADE HAS BEEN TREATED BY PRESIDENT THIEU AND MR IV COMMANDER MG NGUYEN VINH NGHI HAS MOVED THEM TO CRACK DOWN ON CORRUPTION BY SUBORDINATES. PREVIOUSLY, SOME LOCAL OFFICIALS

HAD BEEN ABLE TO GET AWAY WITH EXTORTING PAYMENTS FROM MERCHANTS ILLEGALLY MOVING GOODS ACROSS THE BORDER. SEVERAL CASES HAVE BEEN OPENLY DISCUSSED IN SECTOR STAFF MEETINGS--AN UNPRECEDENTED EVENT--AND ACTION HAS BEEN TAKEN TO STOP THESE PRACTICES.

5. IN THEIR ZEAL TO IMPLEMENT THE BLOCKADE, SECTOR FORCES HAVE PROBABLY CONFISCATED SOME FOODSTUFFS NOT INTENDED FOR CROSS-BORDER SALE. LOCAL RESIDENTS ROUTINELY MOVE FOOD-PARTICULARLY PADDY AND RICE--IN RATHER LARGE QUANTITIES. SINCE PROVINCE OFFICIALS HAVE BEEN STERN IN ENFORCING THE NEW LIMITS ON AMOUNTS OF GOODS THAT CAN BE TRANSPORTED, THEY HAVE NO DOUBT PICKED UP SOME GOODS THAT WERE BEING MOVED LEGITIMATELY. THIS HAS CAUSED SOME GRUMBLING ON THE PART OF LOCAL CITIZENS AND SOME CRITICAL REMARKS BY A KIEN PHONG LOWER HOUSE DEPUTY IN DAI DAN TOC NEWSPAPER. HE CHARGED THAT THE BLOCKADE IS "OPPRESSING" UPPER HONG NGU DISTRICT RESIDENTS. (NOTE: POLICE BOATS FROM TAN CHAU PATROL BOTH SIDES OF THE MEKONG, MEANING THAT HONG NGU AS WELL AS TAN CHAU VILLAGERS COME UNDER THEIR AUTHORITY.)

6. RALLIERS AND POW'S IN CHAU DOC INDICATE THAT THE BLOCKADE HAS CAUSED A SIGNIFICANT RICE SHORTAGE AMONG NVA AND VC UNITS LOCATED IN CAMBODIA AND ON THE SEVEN MOUNTAINS IN CHAU DOC. ONE HOI CHANH STATED THAT AS MANY AS 20 PERCENT OF THE SOLDIERS OF VC AN GIANG PROVINCE HAVE RECENTLY DESERTED FOR THIS REASON. (ANOTHER RALLIER, LE VAN THANH, HEAD OF THE MILITARY PROSELYTING SECTION OF VC CHAU HA PROVINCE, STATED IN EARLY SEPTEMBER THAT RICE SUPPLIES INTENDED FOR NVA TROOPS ON GIAI MOUNTAIN IN CHAU DOC CANNOT BE MOVED BECAUSE OF THE CURRENT RANGER OPERATION THERE.) SEVERAL 1ST NVA DIVISION PRISONERS HAVE ALSO REMARKED THAT RICE STOCKS IN THAT CAMBODIA-BASED UNITS ARE SERIOUSLY LOW, AND THAT DESPITE ALL EFFORTS THE NVA CANNOT BUY THE REQUIRED AMOUNTS ON THE OPEN MARKET.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 SAIGON 17974 161659Z

7. IT IS NOT ONLY THE BLOCKADE WHICH IS CAUSING RICE DIFFICULTIES FOR THE NVA IN CAMBODIA. THE NVA ARE REPORTEDLY FINDING IT HARD TO PROCESS LOCAL PADDY INSIDE CAMBODIA: CHAU DOC SECTOR INTELLIGENCE SOURCES STATE THAT RICE MILLS AT TANI AND TUK MEAS TOWNS, WHICH LIE ALONG ROUTE 16 IN KAMPOT PROVINCE ASTRIDE A MAJOR NVA SUPPLY/INFILTRATION ROUTE, ARE CURRENTLY INOPERATIVE, FORCING THE 1ST NVA DIVISION TO MILL RICE BY HAND. THIS WORK IS GOING ON AT THE V-15 WORK CAMP ON O MOUNTAIN, KIRIVONG DISTRICT, WHICH HAS ABOUT 50 DISCIPLINARY CASES AND DESERTERS FROM THE DIVISION'S SUBORDINATE UNITS. THESE MEN CAN PROCESS ONLY ABOUT 20 KG PER DAY, INSUFFICIENT TO FEED THE ENTIRE DIVISION. THEREFORE, SOME UNITS HAVE BEEN FORCED TO BECOME SELF-SUFFICIENT, AND THE ENSUING PROBLEMS HAVE ENCOURAGED FURTHER DESERTIONS.

LEHMANN UNQTE
MARTIN

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 16 OCT 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973SAIGON17974
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS MARTIN
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: SAIGON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19731029/aaaaavdj.tel
Line Count: 171
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 06 DEC 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <06-Dec-2001 by shawdg>; APPROVED <02-Jan-2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GVN ECONOMIC BLOCKAGE IN CHAU DOC: EFFECTS ON VC/NVA UNITS
TAGS: ECON, MOPS, VS
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005